(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total number of such bodies in the country, *inter-alia* those that are located in Orissa State;

(d) whether for their maintenance and up-keep, the Centre proposes to provide some financial relief to Orissa Government; and

(e) if so, the details, thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Recognizing the value of Wetlands and taking cognizance of the fact that there does not yet exist a formal system of Wetland Regulation, the National Environment Policy (NEP), 2006, as approved by the Cabinet in May 2006 sought to set up a legally enforceable regulatoiy mechanism for identified valuable Wetlands to prevent their degradation and enhance their conservation. A series of meetings were held by the Multi Disciplinary Expert Group constituted for this purpose. The Expert Group prepared its recommendations on the Categories of Wetlands for Regulation Process and Procedure for Identification, Composition of Regulatory Authority, Functions of the Authority, and Activities to the Regulated. A draft notification is proposed to be brought out under the provisions of the Environment Protection Act, 1986.

(c) to (e) At present, 103 wetlands have been identified under National Wetland Conservation Programme, out of which four wetlands, *viz.,* Chilika, Kanjia, Kunaria and Daha wetlands are located in Orissa. Since the notification is still in the draft form, modalities of maintenance and upkeep will be worked out after its finalization. Draft Notification, after approval, will be put on the Ministry's website for comments of experts/State Governments. After incorporating inputs from various agencies and approval by Department of Legal Affairs, the draft notification will be notified under provisions of Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

Improper care of Animals/Birds during the shooting of Jodha-Akbar

224. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some of the animals and birds used for the shooting of Hindi feature film "Jodha-Akbar" died/fell sick on account of improper care of these animals/ birds;

(b) whether Government has issued any guidelines in such matters;

(c) whether Government had received any complaint in the matter;

(d) if so, the substance of the complaint;, and

(e) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EN VIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) No, Sir. No such incident was brought to the notice of the Central Government during the shooting of the film.

(b) The Central Government has made 'Performing Animals (Registration) Rules, 2001' amended as 'Performing Animals (Registration) Amendment Rules, 2002' under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960 to deal with such matters.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Question does not arise.

Dwindling population of wild animals in reserve forests

225. SHRI JANARDHANAPOOJARY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the population of the endangered animals, including lions, tigers and elephants, is dwindling in the reserve forests each passing year; and

(b) if so, the details for the last three years and action proposed to be taken to protect these animals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI S. REGUPATHY): (a) and (b) Fluctuation in the population of wildlife is a natural phenomenon. The status of population of wild animals on a yearly basis is not collected at Government of India level. As per the information available with the Ministry, there are no reports to indicate a continuous sharp decline in the population of endangered species in general. However, habitat degradation and other distrubances can have adverse effrect on the natural population of wildlife. The All India Estimation of Tiger, co-predators and its prey was carried out recently in the tiger range States of the country using a modified and integrated methodology as recommended by the Tiger Task Force. The details are given in the enclosed Statement-I *See* below. However, in view of the modified new methodology adopted in the process, which is a benchmark in itself, it cannot be compared with the previous estimation of wild animals. Similarly the all India enumeration of wild population of elephants in the country was carried out in 2007, except the North Eastern States. The details are given in the enclosed Statement-II *(See* below/

The steps taken by Government of India to protect wildlife and prevent poaching are as under:

1. The Central Government has enacted the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972, to deal with the issues of wildlife crime. Stringent penalties are imposed on the offenders for the contravention of the provisions of the Act.
2. A network of National Parks and Wildlife Sanctuaries has been set up across the country to protect wildlife.
3. Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, with a network a five Regional and three Sub Regional Offices, has been set up to control wildlife crime.
4. Financial support is being provided under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme—*Development of National Parks and Sanctuaries, Project Tiger and Project Elephant,* to State/UT Governments for the conservation and development of wildlife and its habitats.
5. India is a signatory to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) that regulates international trade in wildlife and its derivatives.
6. India has bilateral arrangements with China and Nepal on combating wildlife crime.

In addition, the State/UT Governments have also taken the following measures to protect wild animals

1 Intensive patrolling in sensitive areas

2- Coordination with other law enforcement agencies.